



MICHIGAN

Philippine Nurses Association of Michigan

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March 22, 2007

The Honorable Kathy Angerer
Chairperson, House Committee on Health
Michigan House of Representatives

Dear Madam:

The Philippine Nurses Association of Michigan urges you to support House Bill No. 4207 which proposes to amend 1978 PA 368 entitled "Public Health Code," by adding section 17213.

Internationally educated nurses in Michigan are required to complete the CGFNS Certification comprised of three parts:

- Credentials Review
- A Qualifying Examination of Nursing Knowledge
- English Language Proficiency Examination

Currently, there are 21 states that do not require CGFNS Qualifying Examination of Nursing Knowledge namely: Arkansas, California, Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Mississippi, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oregon, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, and Wisconsin, and New Jersey.

In Michigan, internationally educated nurses who apply for Practical Nursing licensure are not required to take the CGFNS qualifying examination.

The National Council Licensing Examination (NLCEX) Statistics from the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) from January to December 2005 indicate that there are 33,745 Internationally Educated candidates who passed the NCLEX-RN with a passing rate of 43.7%. This represents 21.78 % of the total RN pool for this period – January to December 2005.

The NCSBN announced the approval of twelve NCLEX international testing sites effective April 1, 2006 in addition to the three sites approved in 2005. This brings up the number of international testing centers to eighteen sites in eleven countries with Manila, Philippines as the latest addition (NCSBN Press Release, February 9, 2007).

Background Information:

The story behind the CGFNS started in the late 1960s when the United States had an increase in nurse migration from other countries. Immigration officials were faced with the problem of identifying who were eligible for licensure as registered nurses in the United States. At that time, only 15 to 20% of nurses educated outside the U. S. were passing the registered nurse licensure exam on their first attempt.

In 1975, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (DHEW) sponsored a conference where two studies regarding RN Licensure of foreign educated nurses were presented. These studies were conducted by the American Nurses Association and Pace University. Present at the conference were representatives from the American Nurses Association (ANA), the National League for Nursing (NLN), U.S. Boards of Nursing, the American Hospital Association (AHA), the American Medical Association (AMA), the U. S. Department of Labor, the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, and the New York State Education Department, among other organizations. The outgrowth of the conference was the establishment of the CGFNS, a private, independent, non-profit organization (CGFNS Fact Sheet, 2006).

The United States is in the midst of a nursing shortage that is expected to intensify as baby boomers age and the need for health care grows (AACN, Nursing Shortage Fact Sheet, 2005). Michigan and the entire nation are facing a thirty-year shortage of nurses. The Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth estimates that Michigan's demand for RNs will exceed supply by 7,000 nurses by 2010, with a shortage of 18,000 nurses by 2015, (The Nursing Agenda for Michigan, 2005 – 2010: Actions to Avert a Crisis, 2005).

While it is true that the shortage requires collaborative effort among nursing leaders in practice and education, it is also necessary for the government and the media to participate in the solution of this crisis.

Recruitment of nurses from other countries may help alleviate the shortage in Michigan if the CGFNS Qualifying Exam is not a requirement to practice nursing. The NCLEX-RN is sufficient to test the knowledge, skills, and abilities essential to the safe and effective practice of nursing at the entry level.

We urge you to support this bill!

Very truly yours,

The Philippine Nurses Association of Michigan

Remedios Salarte, RN

Maria Tony Barreda RN

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A Proposal to Remove the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS) Qualifying Examination in Michigan

The CGFNS is an immigration-neutral, non-profit organization and internationally recognized authority on credentials evaluation pertaining to the education, registration, and licensure of nurses and other healthcare professionals worldwide. Its mission is to protect the public by ensuring that nurses and other healthcare professionals educated in countries other than the United States are eligible and qualified to meet licensure, immigration and other practice requirements in the United States (CGFNS Fact Sheet, 2006).

The CGFNS Certification is comprised of three parts:

- Credentials Review
- A Qualifying Examination of Nursing Knowledge
- English Language Proficiency Examination

The proposal of the Philippine Nurses Association of Michigan (PNAM) is:

To remove the CGFNS Qualifying Examination of Nursing Knowledge for those applicants eligible to take the NCLEX-RN (National Council Licensing Exam – Registered Nurse); however, the Credentials Review and the English Language Proficiency Examination will remain as required.

Currently, there are 20 states that do not require CGFNS Qualifying Examination of Nursing Knowledge namely: Arkansas, California, Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Mississippi, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oregon, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, and Wisconsin. Illinois is the latest state which removed the Qualifying Examination as of July 28, 2005. The Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation now utilize the CGFNS Credentials Evaluation Service (CES) as required by the new regulation. The CES, established in 1993 is used to analyze and compare the education and licensure of international applicants to U.S. standards and expectations.

In Michigan, internationally educated nurses who apply for Practical Nursing licensure are not required to take the CGFNS qualifying examination.

The National Council Licensing Examination (NLCEX) Statistics from the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) from January to December 2005 indicate that there are 33,745 Internationally Educated candidates who passed the NCLEX-RN with a passing rate of 43.7%. This represents 21.78 % of the total RN pool for this period – January to December 2005.

The NCSBN recently announced the approval of twelve more NCLEX international testing sites effective April 1, 2006 in addition to the three sites approved in 2005. This brings up the number of international testing centers to fifteen sites in nine countries (NCSBN Press Release, 2006).

Background Information:

The story behind the CGFNS started in the late 1960s when the United States had an increase in nurse migration from other countries. Immigration officials were faced with the problem of identifying who were eligible for licensure as registered nurses in the United States. At that time, only 15 to 20% of nurses educated outside the U. S. were passing the registered nurse licensure exam on their first attempt.

In 1975, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (DHEW) sponsored a conference where two studies regarding RN Licensure of foreign educated nurses were presented. These studies were conducted by the American Nurses Association and Pace University. Present at the conference were representatives from the American Nurses Association (ANA), the National League for Nursing (NLN), U.S. Boards of Nursing, the American Hospital Association (AHA), the American Medical Association (AMA), the U. S. Department of Labor, the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, and the New York State Education Department, among other organizations. The outgrowth of the conference was the establishment of the CGFNS, a private, independent, non-profit organization (CGFNS Fact Sheet, 2006).

The Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA), Section 343 authorizes the CGFNS to screen nurses, occupational therapists, speech/language pathologists and audiologists, medical technologists and technicians and physician assistants who are seeking a temporary or permanent occupational visa in order to work in the U.S., or who are working in the U.S. under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

The United States is in the midst of a nursing shortage that is expected to intensify as baby boomers age and the need for health care grows (AACN, Nursing Shortage Fact Sheet, 2005). Michigan and the entire nation are facing a thirty-year shortage of nurses. The Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth estimates that Michigan's demand for RNs will exceed supply by 7,000 nurses by 2010, with a shortage of 18,000 nurses by 2015, (The Nursing Agenda for Michigan, 2005 – 2010: Actions to Avert a Crisis, 2005).

While it is true that the shortage requires collaborative effort among nursing leaders in practice and education, it is also necessary for the government and the media to participate in the solution of this crisis.

On May 11, 2005, President Bush signed H.R. 1268 (Public Law 109-13) or the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2005. One provision of this act is to make available 50,000 visa numbers for EB-3 (Employment-Based) applicants with petitions approved under a U.S. Department of labor "Schedule A" Labor Certification. RNs are included under this category.

Recruitment of nurses from other countries may help alleviate the shortage in Michigan if the CGFNS Qualifying Exam is not a requirement to practice nursing. The NCLEX-RN is sufficient to test the knowledge, skills, and abilities essential to the safe and effective practice of nursing at the entry level.

Prepared by the CGFNS Task Force:

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